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TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3577
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RUYNAAAC/COMNAVFORJAPAN YOKOSUKA JA PRIORITY
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RUHBANB/OKINAWA FLD OFC US FORCES JAPAN CP BUTLER JA PRIORITY
RUALSFJ/COMUSJAPAN YOKOTA AB JA PRIORITY
INFO RUEHFK/AMCONSUL FUKUOKA 1072
RUEHOK/AMCONSUL OSAKA KOBE 4624
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 7000
RUEHMO/AMEMBASSY MOSCOW 1652
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STATE FOR I/RF, PA/PR/FPC/W, IIP/G/EA, EAP/PD, R/MR,
EAP/J, EAP/P, PM;
USTR FOR PUBLIC AFFAIRS OFFICE;
TREASURY FOR OASIA/IMI;
SECDEF FOR OASD/PA;
CP BUTLER OKINAWA FOR AREA FIELD OFFICE;
PACOM HONOLULU FOR PUBLIC DIPLOMACY ADVISOR

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SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION Q CONSTITUTIONAL LIMITS ON SDF -
TOKYO

11. LEAD STORIES: Most Tuesday morning papers front-
paged DaimlerChrysler's decision to sell the bulk of its
stake in the Chrysler unit to US private equity fund
Cerberus Capital. These papers also gave front-page
coverage to Monday's enactment of referendum legislation
for constitutional amendment.

12. "Unrealistic Views of Opponents to Constitutional
Amendment" The conservative Sankei carried an opinion
piece by former GSDF General and Teikyo University Prof.
Toshiyuki Shikata saying (5/15): "... Japan has finally
taken a further step toward amending Japan's war-
renouncing constitution with the approval on Monday by
the Upper House of an historic national referendum
bill.... It has been frustrating to learn that most
opponents to constitutional revision were also opposed to
defense cooperation between the US and Japan.... Even
national lawmakers in the ruling Liberal Democratic Party
(LDP) have insisted that the Japan Self-Defense Forces
(SDF) is not a military force, considering that the
Japanese constitution does not recognize the right of
belligerency. Yet in the eyes of the Japanese people and
those in neighboring nations, the SDF is nothing if not
armed forces. As things stand, the international
community will not recommend a strange nation like Japan
as a permanent member of the UN Security Council
(UNSC).... There are views in Japan describing US moves
to relax sanctions and focus on a halt to North Korea's
nuclear development - without touching on the North's
possession of nuclear bombs Q as a crafty move, which
runs counter to strengthening the US-Japan alliance....
The truth is that the US is only addressing the North
Korean nuclear standoff as part of its global strategy,
while dealing with Iraq, Iran, and the unification of the

Korean Peninsula, as well as studying the future of US-China relations.... Although the US-Japan alliance is often called 'irreplaceable,' it is only natural that the US makes tactical and strategic moves, which serve the national interest of the US.... Japan, for its part, has just recently undertaken a plan to deploy a missile-defense system and review whether Japan can exercise a right to collective defense."

DONOVAN